

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please enter the following amendments:

1-3. (Cancelled)

~~4.~~ (Original) An isolated and purified recombinant nucleic acid encoding a hemoglobin receptor protein having an amino acid sequence that is the amino acid sequence depicted as Seq. I.D. No. 8.

~~2~~ ² ~~5.~~ (Original) A recombinant expression construct comprising a nucleic acid that encodes a hemoglobin receptor protein from a *Neisseria* species having an amino acid sequence that is the amino acid sequence depicted as Seq. I.D. No. 8.

~~3~~ ³ ~~6.~~ (Original) A transformed cell culture comprising the recombinant expression construct of Claim ² ~~2~~.

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